

Finance Committee Update - Feb 22

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Hi Chrystia,

The Finance committee met for their first meeting on the Emergencies Act. Departmental officials from Finance, Justice and CRA appeared to answer question on the financial measures of the regulations. Several points worth highlighting:

- Committee adopted a subcommittee report outlining plans to complete pre-budget consultations, C-8, and the Emergencies Act study. While things can certainly change, under this timeline:
 - o C-8 would be completed February 28th (tabled in the House February 29th)
 - o Pre-budget consultations would be completed March 10th (tabled in the House March 21st)
 - o Emergencies Act Study would be completed by Thursday March 24th (Tabled in the House by March 28th)
- Committee passed a motion requesting weekly updates on the number of accounts flagged by the RCMP, CSIS, CBSA, Public Safety and FINTRAC under the powers of the Emergencies Act, and that said information be provided in a manner that respects personal privacy, national security, and operational security. See below for the full motion. This motion is only in place while the Emergencies Act is active.
- Conservatives continued to repeat concerns that individual donors' accounts were being frozen.
- Following questions from Daniel Blaikie (NDP), Department of Finance officials committed to coming back with some sort of information on how financial institutions are expected to treat data being given to them by law enforcement under the Emergencies Act.

The majority of questions were directed to Finance officials. Conservative questions focused on freezing of bank accounts and protection of private information. Bloc Québécois questions focused on the protection of personal information, and the criteria for the declaration of a national emergency. NDP questions focused on how the emergency regulations may affect other protests, and whether or not notice could be given to those whose accounts were being frozen. Departmental officials handled themselves well under scrutiny by the opposition.

The committee meets again Thursday, February 24 to hear from the RCMP and FINTRAC on the Emergencies Act.

Do not hesitate to ask if you have any questions or require any further information. Have a great Tuesday!

Alexander Wozny

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